

SAFETY

IN NUMBERS

One Simple Action—A Click

Occupants Killed Who Were Completely Unrestrained at the Time of the Crash



3 in 5

Young occupants, 21 to 24



3 in 5

Teen occupants, 13 to 15



1 in 2

Young tweens, 8 to 12



2 in 5

Children, 4 to 7

You might think that 87 percent sounds like a good national seat belt rate as it means that 184.4 million people wear their seat belts to protect themselves and their loved ones in the event of a crash. But it also means that 27.5 million people still don't get it—a huge number who increase their risk of becoming a statistic in what could have been a survivable crash. We know that unbelted drivers sometimes simply do not know how important seat belts are in keeping them safe, or they say they forgot. Even with strong seat belt laws and highly visible enforcement by State and local police officers reminding drivers to buckle up on every trip, some drivers still do not get the message.

Each May, law enforcement agencies across the Nation conduct NHTSA's best known high-visibility enforcement program, *Click It or Ticket*, with the simple message "Wear your seat belt or you will get a ticket – day or night." Officers write seat belt tickets to persuade unbuckled motorists to take advantage of all of the safety features built into their vehicles. They tell us that they would rather write the ticket than call EMS to assist an injured motorist or knock on a family's door to tell them a loved one won't be coming home. In 2012 alone, the use of seat belts saved 12,174 lives. In the past 5 years, the use of seat belts in passenger vehicles saved nearly 63,000 lives.

For more information, visit:

www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov/CIOT2014



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration

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THE PROBLEM

What Data Tells Us

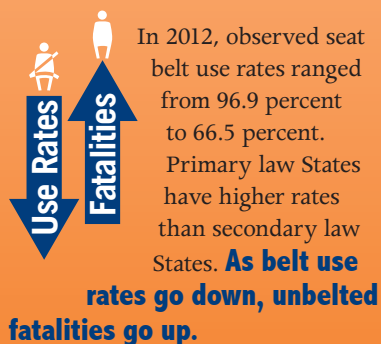
52% Of the 21,667 motor vehicle occupants who died in crashes in 2012, **more than half (52%)**

were not wearing seat belts at the time of the crashes. *2012 Occupant Protection Traffic Safety Fact Sheet.*

More motorists who are killed in nighttime crashes are unrestrained at the time of the crashes (**61%**) than during the daytime (**43%**). *2012 Motor Vehicle Crashes: Overview, November 2013.*



Half (50%) of motor vehicle occupants who died in crashes while seated in the front seats were completely unrestrained and even more (**61%**) occupants in the back seats were unrestrained.



How One North Carolina Community Convinced People to Wear Their Seat Belts

The Trauma Nurses Talk Tough Diversion Program

Robeson County is North Carolina's largest county, located on the South Carolina border along Interstate 95. Because seat belt rates lagged far behind the rest of the State, Robeson County implemented the *Trauma Nurses Talk Tough* (TNTT) seat belt diversion program in 2010. Trauma and emergency room nurses taught weekly classes at Southeastern Regional Medical Center based on the program model first developed at Legacy Emanuel Hospital in Portland, Oregon, in 1988. The program received the full support of medical center management and staff, the Robeson County district attorney, the clerk of the court, and all the law enforcement agencies in the county for the duration of the 15-month program.

How the program worked

Drivers who received citations for not wearing seat belts during those 15 months could attend the class at a cost of \$20 and have the \$126.50 citation dismissed one time, which also meant that their insurance companies were not notified of the violations.

The target group was high-risk drivers who did not respond to seat belt laws.

What the trauma nurses taught

Trauma nurses taught the course at hospitals and told real-life stories about people who sustained preventable injuries because they were not wearing seat belts. The nurses used highly graphic visuals

to show the negative physical, medical, rehabilitation, emotional, legal, and financial consequences of not wearing seat belts from their medical point of view. The photos, people, and injuries were real.

Positive outcomes for attendees

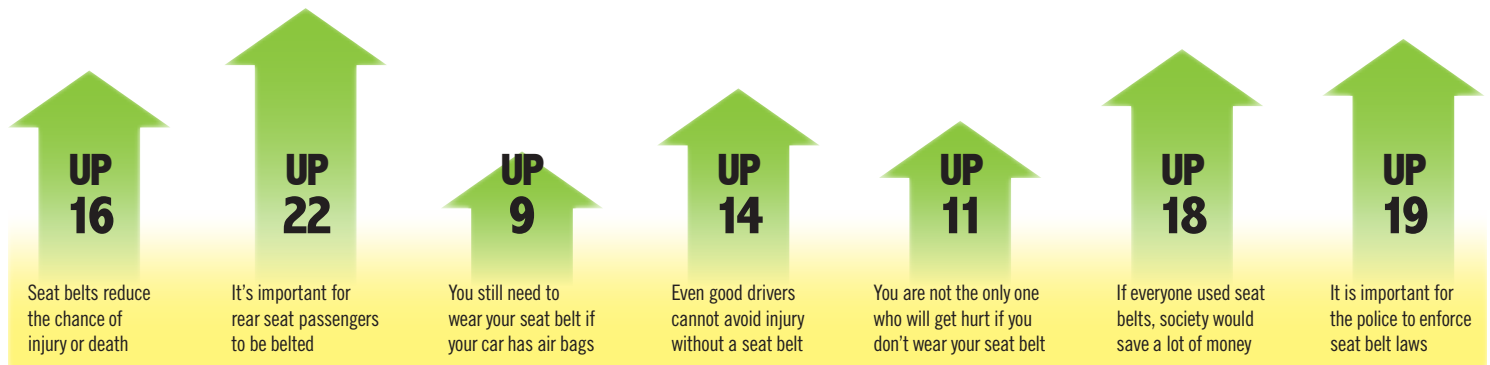
Half the people who received citations and were eligible to attend the course did so, exceeding program expectations. Since violators paid \$20 to attend the evening class, the program was self-sufficient, and the medical center used proceeds to buy approximately 500 child safety seats for the local health department and Safe Kids chapter to distribute throughout the county.

The course had a notable impact on class attendees' opinions about seat belt use, enforcement of the seat belt law, and knowledge of basic highway safety. Observed seat belt use, which had been stagnant for some time in Robeson County, increased by more than 5 percentage points, from 81 percent to 86 percent, during the program.

Setting up the diversion program required the participation of the highway safety office, a large medical center, trauma and ER nurses, the district attorney, and the clerk of the court. New procedures were developed to dismiss the seat belt ticket, and local law enforcement agreed to step up seat belt enforcement during the pilot program. North Carolina has a primary belt law with fines plus fees that are higher than many other States. For more information on the program, see *Demonstration of the "Trauma Nurses Talk Tough" Seat Belt Diversion Program in North Carolina.*

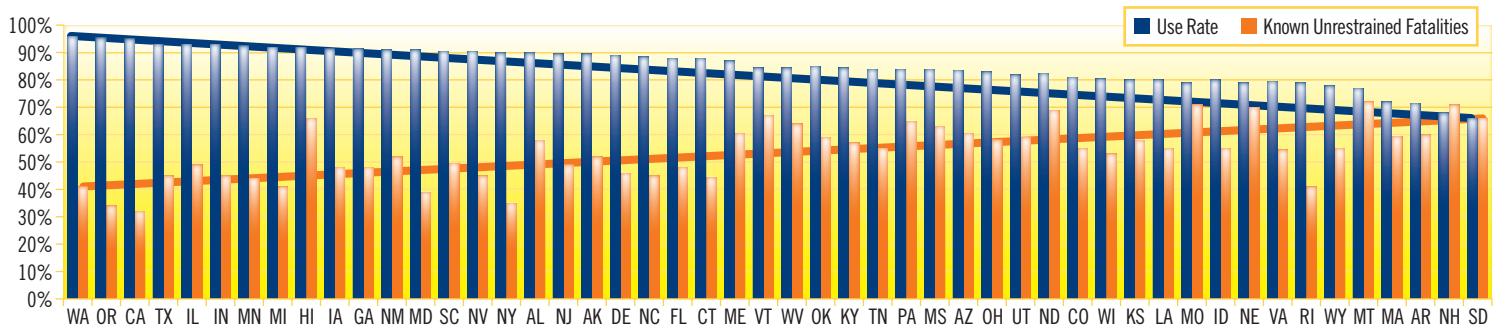
THE FACTS

Percentage Point Increase of Previously Ticketed (Unbelted) Drivers Who Agree With These Statements, Following TNTT Program

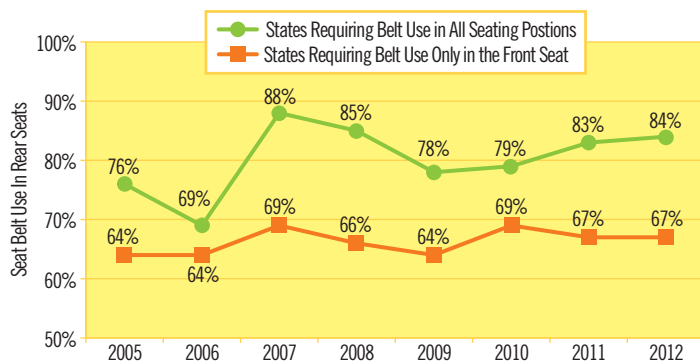


Demonstration of the "Trauma Nurses Talk Tough" Seat Belt Diversion Program in North Carolina, March 2014 (www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811873-Trauma_Nurses_Talk_Tough_SeatBelt.pdf)

Observed Seat Belt Use/Known Unrestrained Fatalities (2012) All States

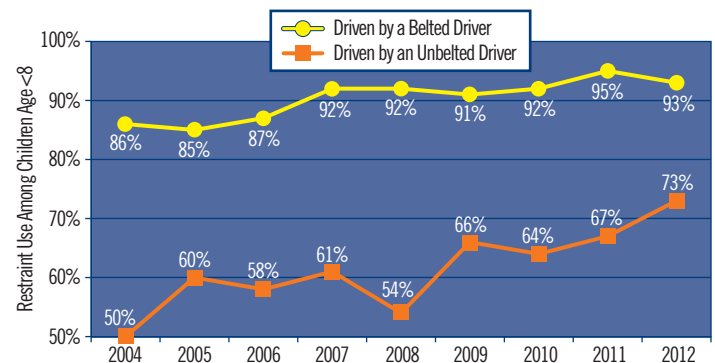


Seat Belt Use in Rear Seats by State Law Type for Occupants 8 and Older, 2005-2012



Occupant Restraint Use in 2012: Results from the National Occupant Protection Use Survey Controlled Intersection Study, January 2014

Child Restraint Use by Driver Belt Status, 2004-2012



Occupant Restraint Use in 2012: Results from the National Occupant Protection Use Survey Controlled Intersection Study, January 2014

WHAT YOU CAN DO

We know what works

NHTSA's *Countermeasures That Work* recommends effective actions that communities can take to improve occupant protection (www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811727.pdf).

Drivers can

- Remember that seat belts should be worn on every trip, not just trips on highways, and make sure everyone is buckled before you begin to drive.
- Remind rear-seat passengers to buckle up so they will not become projectiles inside the car in the event of a crash.

Parents can

- Start a conversation with your tweens (8 to 14) and young drivers about seat belts for drivers and passengers. When teens are driving with adults, they are usually buckled. However, observation surveys show that when they ride with other teens, they often do not wear their seat belts. Insisting on wearing seat belts is not a comment about how well a teen can drive.
- Ensure children are in the proper restraint system for their age and weight (infant, rear-facing, front-facing, booster seat, or adult belt) and that all children under 13 are properly restrained in the back seat.

Law Enforcement Officers can

- Write tickets to drivers who do not wear their seat belts according to your State's law, especially during the May *Click It or Ticket* campaign. Drivers who do not wear their seat belts are more likely to be alcohol-impaired, especially at night. Many are also speeding, which is always a good reason to make a stop. Drivers who have been ticketed are more likely to wear seat belts in the future than those who have received warnings.
- Stop and write citations to drivers who are transporting unrestrained children. Children are more likely to be properly restrained if their driver is wearing a seat belt.
- Ticket truck drivers too—they have the lowest use rate of all vehicle types.
- Wear seat belts for your own safety and to set a good example in your community.



Employers and Businesses can

- Establish a belt use policy in the work place.
- Consider conducting informal seat belt observation surveys at the workplace and post the weekly results where drivers can see them and monitor progress.

States and communities can

- Consider implementing a *Trauma Nurses Talk Tough* program in your communities.
- Step up the visibility of your enforcement campaigns this year by asking businesses to put *Click It or Ticket* messages on their marquees and windows. See the High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) case study report for suggestions (www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811716.pdf).
- Check that your seat belt laws cover all seating positions.

Vehicle Manufacturers can:

- Protect passengers in the event of a crash. NHTSA's 2013 *Significant and Seamless* (www.nhtsa.gov/About+NHTSA/Press+Releases/NHTSA+Announces+Significant+and+Seamless+Initiative) initiative calls for the agency and the automotive industry to aggressively accelerate achievable technological advances that would significantly improve safety, including seat belt interlocks.

For more information, visit:

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